

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 STATE 102675
ORIGIN SNM-05

INFO OCT-01 ARA-10 ISO-00 L-03 DEAE-00 OES-07 NSCE-00
HEW-04 CIAE-00 INR-10 IO-13 JUSE-00 NSAE-00
CTME-00 TRSE-00 OMB-01 INRE-00 ICAE-00 AGRE-00
SSO-00 EPA-01 /055 R

DRAFTED BY S/NM:RADUGSTAD:OSD
APPROVED BY S/NM:MFALCO
ARA/MEX:KMCKUNE (DRAFT)
L:POLSON (DRAFT)
DEA:DGALANOS (DRAFT)
OES:WMANSFIELD (DRAFT)
DPS/WHITE HOUSE:DDUNNING (DRAFT)
ARA/RPP:JKEANE (INFO)
-----006984 220153Z /14
O 220053Z APR 78
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY MEXICO IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 102675

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SNAR, MX

SUBJECT: STATEMENT ON ALTERNATIVE HERBICIDE

1. THE PRELIMINARY FINDINGS OF THE NIDA STUDY COMMISSIONED
IN JUNE 1977 TO INVESTIGATE THE POSSIBLE HEALTH HAZARD
POSED TO AMERICAN MARIJUANA SMOKERS BY PARAQUAT CONTAMINATED
MARIJUANA ILLEGALLY IMPORTED FROM MEXICO, WAS RELEASED TO
THE PUBLIC ON MARCH 12. A SUBSEQUENT PRESS RELEASE BY HEW
SECRETARY CALIFANO WARNED MARIJUANA SMOKERS OF A POTENTIAL
ADDITIONAL RISK THEY FACE OVER AND ABOVE THE INHERENT
HEALTH OR LEGAL DANGER INVOLVED IN MARIJUANA CONSUMPTION.
THE WARNING WAS NOTED BY THE PRESS AND MEDIA IN THE U.S.
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 STATE 102675

AND HAS RECEIVED WIDESPREAD COVERAGE.

2. THE DRUG POLICY OFFICE OF THE WHITE HOUSE SUBSEQUENTLY
REQUESTED HEW, AGRICULTURE, AND ERA TO EXAMINE ALTERNATIVE
HERBICIDES. THAT INQUIRY HAS NOW RESULTED IN A PRELIMINARY
CONCLUSION THAT 2,4-D IS A SAFER CHEMICAL THAN PARAQUAT
FOR USE IN A MARIJUANA ERADICATION PROGRAM.

3. THESE FINDINGS ARE SUMMARIZED IN THE STATEMENT SET FORTH IN PARA 8 THAT IS PROPOSED FOR RELEASE TO THE PUBLIC ON APRIL 24.

4. IN KEEPING WITH THE ONGOING CONSULTATIONS WITH THE MEXICAN GOVERNMENT CONCERNING THIS ISSUE AND OTHERS OF THE COOPERATIVE U.S. AND MEXICAN NARCOTICS CONTROL EFFORT, WE REQUEST THAT THE STATEMENT BE SHOWN TO THE MEXICAN ATTORNEY GENERAL PRIOR TO ITS RELEASE.

5. THE TIMING OF THE RELEASE OF THE MESSAGE IS URGENT IN VIEW OF THE SCHEDULE OF HEARINGS FOR THE NORML LAWSUIT AND THE EXPECTED ATTENTION THAT THIS ISSUE WILL RECEIVE DURING THE SENATE FOREIGN RELATIONS HEARING SCHEDULED FOR APRIL 26.

6. THE MEXICAN ERADICATION EFFORT AGAINST OPIUM POPPIES IS SHOWING A SIGNIFICANT REDUCTION IN HEROIN IN THE UNITED STATES; CONSEQUENTLY, THE PROGRAM IS DIMINISHING THE DRUG PROBLEM IN THIS COUNTRY. THIS PROGRAM, WHICH IS OBVIOUSLY IN OUR BEST INTERESTS, MUST BE MAINTAINED ALONG WITH EFFORTS BEING MADE TO REDUCE THE HEALTH HAZARD OF PARAQUAT CONTAMINATION OF MARIJUANA. THE CREDIT FOR CURRENT PROGRESS IN AMELIORATING THE DRUG PROBLEM CAN BE LARGELY GIVEN TO THE COMMITMENT AND EFFORT OF THE MEXICAN GOVERNMENT FOR

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 STATE 102675

WHICH THE U.S. GOVERNMENT IS DEEPLY APPRECIATIVE. THE UNDERSTANDING, SUPPORT, AND COOPERATION THAT THE MEXICAN GOVERNMENT IS PROVIDING US IN DEALING WITH THIS ISSUE ARE MOST HELPFUL.

7. THE EMBASSY IS ASKED TO REVIEW THE TEXT OF THE PROPOSED STATEMENT, SHOW ITS CONTENTS TO THE ATTORNEY GENERAL AND PROVIDE US WITH COMMENTS ASAP.

8. FOLLOWING IS THE PROPOSED TEXT: BEGIN QUOTE

DR. PETER BOURNE, SPECIAL ASSISTANT TO THE PRESIDENT, TODAY ANNOUNCED THAT AN ALTERNATIVE TO THE HERBICIDE PARAQUAT FOR MARIJUANA ERADICATION WAS BEING CONSIDERED BECAUSE OF THE GOVERNMENT'S INTEREST IN THE POSSIBLE HEALTH CONSEQUENCES TO THOSE AMERICANS WHO ILLEGALLY USE MARIJUANA FROM MEXICO WHICH MAY HAVE BEEN SPRAYED WITH PARAQUAT. DR. BOURNE STATED, "WHILE WE STILL MAINTAIN A POLICY OF DISCOURAGING THE USE OF MARIJUANA, WE ARE CONCERNED ABOUT THE POSSIBLE HEALTH CONSEQUENCES OF MARIJUANA SPRAYED WITH HERBICIDES."

ALTHOUGH NO SPECIFIC EVIDENCE OF ADVERSE EFFECTS HAVE BEEN PROVEN AMONG MARIJUANA USERS, CONCERN HAS BEEN RAISED REGARDING THE USE OF PARAQUAT IN ERADICATING MARIJUANA. FOLLOWING THE RELEASE OF PRELIMINARY HEALTH INFORMATION BY THE DEPARTMENT OF HEW ON MARCH 12, 1978, THE DRUG POLICY

OFFICE OF THE WHITE HOUSE, AS PART OF AN OVERALL REVIEW OF THE ISSUE BEGUN IN MID-1977, DIRECTED THAT AN INTERAGENCY REVIEW OF ALTERNATIVE SPRAY MATERIALS BE UNDERTAKEN.

THE REVIEW WAS CONDUCTED BY THE DEPARTMENTS OF AGRICULTURE, HEW, AND THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY, AND IDENTIFIED 13 ALTERNATIVE CHEMICALS. AVAILABLE DATA SUGGEST THAT THE CHEMICAL 2,4-D MIGHT BE EFFECTIVE IN ERADICATING THE PLANT
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 STATE 102675

WITHOUT BEING TOXIC TO USERS IN AMOUNTS WHICH MIGHT REMAIN. THE GROUP RECOMMENDED THAT THE SPRAY MATERIAL BE COMBINED WITH A NOXIOUS BUT SAFE ADDITIVE THAT WOULD YIELD EASY IDENTIFICATION FOR THE USER SHOULD THE SPRAYED MARIJUANA BE ILLEGALLY HARVESTED AND BROUGHT INTO THE UNITED STATES. THERE ARE A NUMBER OF POSSIBILITIES FOR SUCH AN ADDITIVE.

THE USE OF LOW VOLATILE ESTERS OF 2,4-D APPLIED IN OIL OR WATER EMULSIONS IS CURRENTLY REGISTERED IN THE UNITED STATES BY THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY FOR THE CONTROL OF A BROAD SPECTRUM OF WEEDS IN MANY FOOD, FEED, AND FIBER CROPS AND FOR CONTROL OF WEEDS IN AQUATIC AND NON-CROP LAND SITES.

THE POSSIBILITY OF USING ALTERNATIVE SPRAY MATERIAL HAS BEEN DISCUSSED WITH THE MEXICAN GOVERNMENT. AS PART OF ITS OWN EXTENSIVE RESEARCH EFFORT IN CONTINUING EVALUATION OF SPRAYS USED FOR ERADICATION AND GENERAL AGRICULTURAL PURPOSES, THE MEXICAN GOVERNMENT IS CONSIDERING THE ADDITION OF A NOXIOUS AGENT TO THE CHEMICALS USED IN ERADICATION. WE HAVE PASSED OUR INITIAL FINDINGS CONCERNING 2,4-D TO THE MEXICAN GOVERNMENT, AS PART OF OUR ONGOING COOPERATIVE EFFORTS TO CONTROL ILLICIT DRUG TRAFFIC. BOTH GOVERNMENTS WILL WORK TOGETHER TO ASSURE THAT APPROPRIATE CONSIDERATION WILL BE GIVEN TO RESOLVE ANY HEALTH HAZARDS IN THE NARCOTICS CONTROL EFFORT. END OF QUOTE. CHRISTOPHER

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 STATE 102675

ORIGIN IO-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /015 R

66011

DRAFTED BY IO/HDC:EEDWARDS

APPROVED BY IO/HDC:RANDREW

-----048986 251451Z /50

R 251159Z APR 78

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

INFO USMISSION GENEVA 0000

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 102675

FOLLOWING REPEAT STATE 102675 ACTION MEXICO APR 22.

QUOTE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 102675

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SNAR, MX

SUBJECT: STATEMENT ON ALTERNATIVE HERBICIDE

1. THE PRELIMINARY FINDINGS OF THE NIDA STUDY COMMISSIONED IN JUNE 1977 TO INVESTIGATE THE POSSIBLE HEALTH HAZARD POSED TO AMERICAN MARIJUANA SMOKERS BY PARAQUAT CONTAMINATED MARIJUANA ILLEGALLY IMPORTED FROM MEXICO, WAS RELEASED TO THE PUBLIC ON MARCH 12. A SUBSEQUENT PRESS RELEASE BY HEW SECRETARY CALIFANO WARNED MARIJUANA SMOKERS OF A POTENTIAL ADDITIONAL RISK THEY FACE OVER AND ABOVE THE INHERENT HEALTH OR LEGAL DANGER INVOLVED IN MARIJUANA CONSUMPTION. THE WARNING WAS NOTED BY THE PRESS AND MEDIA IN THE U.S. AND HAS RECEIVED WIDESPREAD COVERAGE.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 STATE 102675

2. THE DRUG POLICY OFFICE OF THE WHITE HOUSE SUBSEQUENTLY REQUESTED HEW, AGRICULTURE, AND ERA TO EXAMINE ALTERNATIVE HERBICIDES. THAT INQUIRY HAS NOW RESULTED IN A PRELIMINARY CONCLUSION THAT 2,4-D IS A SAFER CHEMICAL THAN PARAQUAT FOR USE IN A MARIJUANA ERADICATION PROGRAM.

3. THESE FINDINGS ARE SUMMARIZED IN THE STATEMENT SET FORTH IN PARA 8 THAT IS PROPOSED FOR RELEASE TO THE PUBLIC ON APRIL 24.

4. IN KEEPING WITH THE ONGOING CONSULTATIONS WITH THE MEXICAN GOVERNMENT CONCERNING THIS ISSUE AND OTHERS OF THE COOPERATIVE U.S. AND MEXICAN NARCOTICS CONTROL EFFORT, WE REQUEST THAT THE STATEMENT BE SHOWN TO THE MEXICAN ATTORNEY GENERAL PRIOR TO ITS RELEASE.

5. THE TIMING OF THE RELEASE OF THE MESSAGE IS URGENT IN VIEW OF THE SCHEDULE OF HEARINGS FOR THE NORMAL LAWSUIT AND THE EXPECTED ATTENTION THAT THIS ISSUE WILL RECEIVE DURING THE SENATE FOREIGN RELATIONS HEARING SCHEDULED FOR APRIL 26.

6. THE MEXICAN ERADICATION EFFORT AGAINST OPIUM POPPIES IS SHOWING A SIGNIFICANT REDUCTION IN HEROIN IN THE UNITED STATES; CONSEQUENTLY, THE PROGRAM IS DIMINISHING THE DRUG PROBLEM IN THIS COUNTRY. THIS PROGRAM, WHICH IS OBVIOUSLY IN OUR BEST INTERESTS, MUST BE MAINTAINED ALONG WITH EFFORTS BEING MADE TO REDUCE THE HEALTH HAZARD OF PARAQUAT CONTAMINATION OF MARIJUANA. THE CREDIT FOR CURRENT PROGRESS IN AMELIORATING THE DRUG PROBLEM CAN BE LARGELY GIVEN TO THE COMMITMENT AND EFFORT OF THE MEXICAN GOVERNMENT FOR WHICH THE U.S. GOVERNMENT IS DEEPLY APPRECIATIVE. THE UNDERSTANDING, SUPPORT, AND COOPERATION THAT THE MEXICAN GOVERNMENT HAS PROVIDED IS APPRECIATED.

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 STATE 102675

GOVERNMENT IS PROVIDING US IN DEALING WITH THIS ISSUE ARE MOST HELPFUL.

7. THE EMBASSY IS ASKED TO REVIEW THE TEXT OF THE PROPOSED STATEMENT, SHOW ITS CONTENTS TO THE ATTORNEY GENERAL AND PROVIDE US WITH COMMENTS ASAP.

8. FOLLOWING IS THE PROPOSED TEXT: BEGIN QUOTE

DR. PETER BOURNE, SPECIAL ASSISTANT TO THE PRESIDENT, TODAY ANNOUNCED THAT AN ALTERNATIVE TO THE HERBICIDE PARAQUAT FOR MARIJUANA ERADICATION WAS BEING CONSIDERED BECAUSE OF THE GOVERNMENT'S INTEREST IN THE POSSIBLE HEALTH CONSEQUENCES TO THOSE AMERICANS WHO ILLEGALLY USE MARIJUANA FROM MEXICO WHICH MAY HAVE BEEN SPRAYED WITH PARAQUAT. DR. BOURNE STATED, "WHILE WE STILL MAINTAIN A POLICY OF DISCOURAGING THE USE OF MARIJUANA, WE ARE CONCERNED ABOUT THE POSSIBLE HEALTH CONSEQUENCES OF MARIJUANA SPRAYED WITH HERBICIDES."

ALTHOUGH NO SPECIFIC EVIDENCE OF ADVERSE EFFECTS HAVE BEEN

PROVEN AMONG MARIJUANA USERS, CONCERN HAS BEEN RAISED REGARDING THE USE OF PARAQUAT IN ERADICATING MARIJUANA. FOLLOWING THE RELEASE OF PRELIMINARY HEALTH INFORMATION BY THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH ON MARCH 12, 1978, THE DRUG POLICY

OFFICE OF THE WHITE HOUSE, AS PART OF AN OVERALL REVIEW OF THE ISSUE BEGUN IN MID-1977, DIRECTED THAT AN INTERAGENCY REVIEW OF ALTERNATIVE SPRAY MATERIALS BE UNDERTAKEN.

THE REVIEW WAS CONDUCTED BY THE DEPARTMENTS OF AGRICULTURE, HEW, AND THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY, AND IDENTIFIED 13 ALTERNATIVE CHEMICALS. AVAILABLE DATA SUGGEST THAT THE CHEMICAL 2,4-D MIGHT BE EFFECTIVE IN ERADICATING THE PLANT WITHOUT BEING TOXIC TO USERS IN AMOUNTS WHICH MIGHT REMAIN. THE GROUP RECOMMENDED THAT THE SPRAY MATERIAL BE COMBINED

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 STATE 102675

WITH A NOXIOUS BUT SAFE ADDITIVE THAT WOULD YIELD EASY IDENTIFICATION FOR THE USER SHOULD THE SPRAYED MARIJUANA BE ILLEGALLY HARVESTED AND BROUGHT INTO THE UNITED STATES. THERE ARE A NUMBER OF POSSIBILITIES FOR SUCH AN ADDITIVE.

THE USE OF LOW VOLATILE ESTERS OF 2,4-D APPLIED IN OIL OR WATER EMULSIONS IS CURRENTLY REGISTERED IN THE UNITED STATES BY THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY FOR THE CONTROL OF A BROAD SPECTRUM OF WEEDS IN MANY FOOD, FEED, AND FIBER CROPS AND FOR CONTROL OF WEEDS IN AQUATIC AND NON-CROP LAND SITES.

THE POSSIBILITY OF USING ALTERNATIVE SPRAY MATERIAL HAS BEEN DISCUSSED WITH THE MEXICAN GOVERNMENT. AS PART OF ITS OWN EXTENSIVE RESEARCH EFFORT IN CONTINUING EVALUATION OF SPRAYS USED FOR ERADICATION AND GENERAL AGRICULTURAL PURPOSES, THE MEXICAN GOVERNMENT IS CONSIDERING THE ADDITION OF A NOXIOUS AGENT TO THE CHEMICALS USED IN ERADICATION. WE HAVE PASSED OUR INITIAL FINDINGS CONCERNING 2,4-D TO THE MEXICAN GOVERNMENT, AS PART OF OUR ONGOING COOPERATIVE EFFORTS TO CONTROL ILLICIT DRUG TRAFFIC. BOTH GOVERNMENTS WILL WORK TOGETHER TO ASSURE THAT APPROPRIATE CONSIDERATION WILL BE GIVEN TO RESOLVE ANY HEALTH HAZARDS IN THE NARCOTICS CONTROL EFFORT. END OF QUOTE. CHRISTOPHER UNQUOTE VANCE

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: DRUG CONTROL, CROP DESTRUCTION, HEALTH, PRESS RELEASES, HERBICIDES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 22 apr 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978STATE102675
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: RADUGSTAD:OSD
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780171-1061
Format: TEL
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780428/aaaaaxhe.tel
Line Count: 324
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 181654a9-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ORIGIN SNM
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 6
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 19 jul 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2881197
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: STATEMENT ON ALTERNATIVE HERBICIDE
TAGS: SNAR, MX, US
To: MEXICO
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/181654a9-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014